

Message Text

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FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS OF ISRAELI CABINET COMMUNIQUE

SUBJ: PRESS REPORTS OF ISRAELI COMMUNIQUE

NO. 2

1. UPI REPORT JERUSALEM: THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT SUNDAY
REJECTED AS "UNJUSTIFIED" U. S. OBJECTIONS TO THE ESTABLISH-
MENT OF NEW JEWISH SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK
OF THE JORDAN RIVER.

STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HODDING CARTER SAID LAST WEEK
THE UNITED STATES FEELS ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES VIOLATES INTERNATIONAL LAW AS WELL AS BLOCKING
PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE.

"THE GOVERNMENT EXPRESSES ITS SORROW AT THE UNJUSTIFIED
STATEMENTS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN," A CABINET
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COMMUNIQUE SAID.

"ISRAEL DOES NOT ACCEPT AND CANNOT ACCEPT THE ARGUMENT
THAT JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL IS ILLEGAL.

"THE GOVERNMENT RESTATES THAT SETTLEMENT IS NOT AND WILL
NOT BE AN OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD PEACE," THE

COMMUNIQUE SAID.

CABINET SECRETARY ARYE NAOR SAID THE STATEMENT WAS ACCEPTED BY THE CABINET WITHOUT A VOTE.

GOVERNMENT SOURCES SAID IT WAS ISSUED AS A RESPONSE TO CRITICISM FROM WORLD CAPITALS OF THE ISRAELI DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH THREE NEW SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY.

THE CABINET STATEMENT MADE NO MENTION OF THE DECISION LAST MONTH TO GRANT PERMANENT STATUS TO THREE JEWISH WORK CAMPS ON THE WEST BANK OR ITS OFFER TO GRANT EQUAL SERVICES TO ARABS IN OCCUPIED LAND. END TEXT.

2. REUTER REPORT JERUSALEM: THE RIGHT-WING ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TODAY REBUKED THE UNITED STATES FOR DISAPPROVING OF LAST WEEK'S MOVE TO SET UP THREE NEW JEWISH SETTLEMENTS IN ARAB LAND ON THE WEST BANK OF THE RIVER JORDAN.

A STATEMENT ISSUED AFTER THE REGULAR WEEKLY CABINET MEETING CHALLENGED THE AMERICAN ASSERTION THAT THESE SETTLEMENTS WERE AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE.

COMING AT A TIME WHEN THE UNITED STATES APPEARED EAGER TO REDUCE FRICTION BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND JERUSALEM, THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CABINET STATEMENT CAUSED SOME SURPRISE AMONG DIPLOMATS.

THE CABINET STATEMENT SAID: "THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL EXPRESSES REGRET AT THE UNJUSTIFIED REMARKS MADE IN THE NAME OF THE U. S. GOVERNMENT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN CONCERNING THE CARRYING OUT OF AN ISRAELI GOVERNMENT DECISION ADOPTED ON APRIL 19, 1977, RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THREE SETTLEMENTS IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (THE WEST BANK)."

BY MENTIONING THE DATE ON WHICH THE PLAN WAS FIRST PUT FORWARD, THE CABINET WAS RE-EMPHASIZING THAT THE SETTLEMENTS WERE INITIALLY PROPOSED BY THE FORMER LABOR GOVERNMENT WHICH LOST POWER IN MAY.

ON AUGUST 27 THE GOVERNMENT DISCLOSED THAT IT INTENDED TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN FOR THESE SETTLEMENTS, AMID THE STORM OF INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM, STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HODDING CARTER SAID THE SETTLEMENTS WERE UNHELPFUL TO PEACE.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL CANNOT ACCEPT THE ASSERTION THAT

JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL IS REGARDED AS

ILLEGAL," THE STATEMENT CONTINUED.

BY "LAND OF ISRAEL" THE STATEMENT MEANT PRE-WORLD WAR TWO PALESTINE. THIS WOULD INCLUDE MOST OF THE WEST BANK AREA.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL REAFFIRMS AND STATES THAT SETTLEMENT IS NOT AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE AND WILL BE NO OBSTACLE WHATEVER IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE TREATIES."

AFTER READING OUT THE STATEMENT. CABINET SECRETARY ARYE NAOR REFUSED TO ANSWER ANY OF THE QUESTIONS HURLED AT HIM. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MR. NAOR, WHO HAS COME IN FOR PRESS CRITICISM OVER SOME OF HIS PREVIOUS FREE-RANGING STATEMENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF GREATER ISRAEL, DECLINED TO EXPLAIN WHAT THE CABINET MEANT BY SAYING THE SETTLEMENTS WOULD BE NO OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS. END TEXT.

3. FOLLOWING INTERIM GUIDANCE CLEARED BY NEA-ATHERTON BEING USED BY DUTY OFFICER:

QUESTION: HAVE YOU ANY COMMENT ON THE ISRAELI CABINET COMMUNIQUE?

ANSWER: OUR STATEMENT OF LAST WEEK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. I HAVE NOTHING TO ADD TO IT.

QUESTION: HOW DOES THIS DISPUTE AFFECT US-ISRAELI RELATIONS? AREN'T THEY WORSENING?

ANSWER: AS THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER SPOKESMAN HAVE NOTED IN THE PAST, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE LONGSTANDING CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND ISRAEL ARE AFFECTED BY DISAGREEMENTS OF THIS TYPE.

CHRISTOPHER

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